



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Mr. Herkless, who is not merely a professor at St. Andrews but also provost of the city, tells his story with no touch of imaginative insight or dramatic skill. Yet Beaton is a figure worthy of striking portrayal. Though he was the celibate leader of the Scottish Church, he yet had at least eleven sons and also, it is said, six daughters, each of them by a different mother. Most of the sons and daughters were legitimated. Beaton knew no shame in regard to his children. One at least of his daughters was married in his presence with great pomp and was heavily dowered by her father. His children married into the best Scottish families and Beaton's blood still runs strong in the nobility of Scotland. It is a strange tale, in the light of our present-day thought. We have in this volume the facts laboriously and accurately compiled from original authorities but we have not the magic quality that would make of such a story living history.

Select Charters of Trading Companies, A. D. 1530-1707. Edited for the Selden Society by CECIL T. CARR. [Publications of the Selden Society, vol. XXVIII.] (London: Bernard Quaritch. 1913. Pp. cxxxvi, 322.)

The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720. By WILLIAM ROBERT SCOTT, M.A., D.Phil., Litt.D., Lecturer in Political Economy, University of St. Andrews. Volume I. *The General Development of the Joint-Stock System to 1720.* (Cambridge: The University Press. 1912. Pp. lvi, 488.)

It is a gratifying indication of the advancing interest in English economic history when two important works so nearly in the same field, the one devoted primarily to making accessible the sources of knowledge, the other to their interpretation, appear practically simultaneously. Mr. Carr's volume in the Selden Society, however, like its predecessors in that series, is by no means merely a reprint of documents. An introduction of more than a hundred pages forms an essay on the growth of incorporated companies comparable with Professor Maitland's classic treatises on various phases of the law in the early volumes of that society's publications. Nevertheless the original material is its most characteristic content. The forty-one charters are all drawn from the Patent Rolls and all printed here for the first time. In addition Mr. Carr gives information concerning the places where a large number of other charters are to be found in print. As usual among English writers, he is deficient in his knowledge of work done in America, and fails to note the Staplers' charters of 1561 and 1617 printed in Jenckes's *The Staple of England*, and the large extracts from the charters of the Merchants Adventurers printed in Lingelbach's *The Merchants Adventurers of England*. But these are relatively small omissions and with the guidance given in this volume a student can now do what was practically impossible a few years ago, obtain a general conspectus of the whole body

of fundamental material needed for an understanding, so far as it can be found from their charters, of the exploring, trading, manufacturing, and colonizing companies which were so characteristic a feature of the period from the middle of the sixteenth century to the second quarter of the eighteenth.

The first of the charters here printed is that of the merchants trading to Spain and Portugal, granted in 1530, a company whose history has been particularly obscure. This grant became the immediate model for later patents to the same company and to the merchants trading to France, and not improbably for still other early charters. Since so many charters of the larger commercial and plantation companies have been already printed, those chosen for this volume are predominantly of companies for mining, manufacturing, fishing, and similar purposes; but various supplementary or previously neglected grants to the Muscovy, Levant, Newfoundland, and African companies are included. The series is closed with two charters of the reign of Queen Anne, one for an insurance company, the other for a pawnbroking society organized for philanthropic purposes.

Among the interesting and relatively unfamiliar points brought out in Mr. Carr's introduction are the gradual and cumulative and so to speak experimental progress of the device of incorporation for bodies of this sort. Religious, charitable, educational, and municipal bodies were early treated as corporations, but the growth of the same conception in connection with industrial or trading groups seems to have begun only with the grant of powers of self-government to certain groups of merchants in 1391, attaining practical completeness by the reign of Elizabeth. Companies for distant trade were the most interesting forms of this incorporation and the series here published, beginning with the charter of the Muscovy Company in 1555, covers a geographical extent which spreads from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, from the coast of America to the East Indies. The narrative of the history of these companies cannot all be drawn, however, from these documents, and in that part of it which depends on other sources there is much that is uncertain and much that is obscure. Mr. Carr's account of the formation of the Eastland Company is an instance of the former, of the early days of the Levant Company an instance of the latter. On the other hand, his description of the gradual identification of the position of member with that of stockholder in the East India Company is especially illuminating. Incorporation in the case of manufacturing and trading companies ran easily into monopolies and the history of one movement leads Mr. Carr naturally into a rather full account of the other.

In the later seventeenth century there was an obvious tendency to extend certain corporations beyond the object for which they were originally intended; mining companies being combined with lotteries, banks, insurance companies, and public charities; proposals being made to unite fishing companies with the monopoly of the minting of small coins and the farm of the tobacco and salt duties. The Hollow Sword

Blade Company owned lands in Ireland and carried on banking in London, besides still other interests. But the shadow of the period of South Sea Company speculation was by the time these companies were organized already falling on the country and giving to the companies an abnormal growth. It is of interest to note that insurance was in the beginning, as it bids fair to be in the end, looked upon as a matter naturally belonging in the sphere of governmental activity, rather than in that of private enterprise, as was notably true also of the water supply of towns. It seems to have been rather a matter of chance that such public concerns fell eventually into the hands of private investors and that this condition of affairs was long looked upon as normal, if not necessary.

Many of the same points as are treated in Mr. Carr's introduction are discussed at still further length and with greater fullness, though from a different point of view, in Professor Scott's *Joint-Stock Companies*. The second and third volumes of this work, which were the first to appear, have already been reviewed in this journal (XVI. 604; XVII. 370). The ingenious plan of leaving the publication of the first volume till after the completion of the other two, if somewhat perplexing to the reader, gives the author the opportunity to draw upon an immense amount of detail in making the generalizations that are the special interest and value of this volume. In estimating the work, which is now completed, advantage must be taken of the opportunity to state that as a whole it is a work of unusual erudition, originality, and value. No such large body of widely sought facts has heretofore been brought together for the elucidation of any single problem of economic history. Professor Scott's constructive ability has moreover been equal to the task of utilizing these materials in making a continuous, logical, and interesting narrative.

The most notable characteristic of this narrative is its statement and description of a series of alternating periods of financial activity and depression analogous to those already familiar in later ages. These periods of prosperity and crisis are brought out by skillfully weaving the history of government finances in with that of the joint-stock companies, as one after another they obtained their charters and engaged in trade, and with the history of privateering and other characteristic forms of contemporary speculation. The proceeds of the subsidies granted by Parliament, of the loans negotiated by Gresham in the Netherlands, and of the ordinary revenue from customs and crown property are ingeniously combined with the amount of dividends earned by the joint-stock companies and with the plunder brought home from the seas by Drake and Cumberland, to show how much capital was in the country and how profitably or unprofitably it was employed. Thus a succession of crises or depressions in 1569-1574, 1587-1603, 1620-1625, and at similar intervals alternated with intervening periods of prosperity, according to Mr. Scott's interpretation, until the series, so far as this work is concerned, culminated in the South Sea boom and its collapse

in 1720. This outline of events furnishes a convenient thread upon which to arrange the occurrences and conditions that Mr. Scott is interested in describing. It possesses unity, impressiveness, and interest. But we do not find the evidence for its correctness entirely convincing. We have a haunting feeling that, during the early periods at least, the same material could be rearranged in such a way as to reverse the periods of crisis and prosperity, and yet not impugn the truth of any of Mr. Scott's actual statements of concrete fact. Since this review will be read by historians rather than economists it may perhaps be said without offense that some of the reasoning in Mr. Scott's work is rigorous enough to suit economists, but not to suit historians. The proof given for the disposition of Drake's plunder brought home in 1580, as given on pages 78-82, is too tenuous to be safely used, as it later is, as one link in a chain of reasoning. It is ingenious, interesting, and may be correct, but it is certainly not unquestionable. There is besides a constant tendency to rely on the financial interpretation of events which may well be explained in other ways. The crisis of 1569-1574 is given a much larger influence in the advance of English privateering against Spain than the narrative itself justifies. Elizabeth's decisions are often attributed to financial motives when this explanation is readily disproved by the fact that she accepted the same policy somewhat later, usually too late, as in the case of the fall of Antwerp. A queen's vacillating disposition is just as truly an historical influence as the condition of the money-market. The whole statement of the reasons for the parliamentary action in favor of the Muscovy Company in 1566, given on page 35, is supposititious. It may or may not be correct, but no authority exists for it; and it is to be remembered that the council had already taken the same action in 1564 and the Court of Admiralty gave a similar decision in 1572.

This tendency to give to events a purely financial explanation, and to arrange them in a sequence that is not, to say the least, obviously justified, are perhaps small criticisms of a work of such solidity. The somewhat bizarre method of punctuation is a still smaller one. Everything else is of the best. Index, bibliography, foot-notes, tables, print, and paper are all clear, adequate, and valuable. Interspersed among the chapters devoted to the narratives of these periods of prosperity and decline are valuable descriptive chapters devoted to important aspects of the development of joint-stock companies: their origin, the legislation on monopolies, their exploitation by the crown, and their position in a general philosophic scheme. This concluding volume, following on its two notable predecessors, establishes in full security the position of Professor Scott's work as the standard work in the field, and it is hard to see how it can at any early period be superseded.

EDWARD P. CHEYNEY.